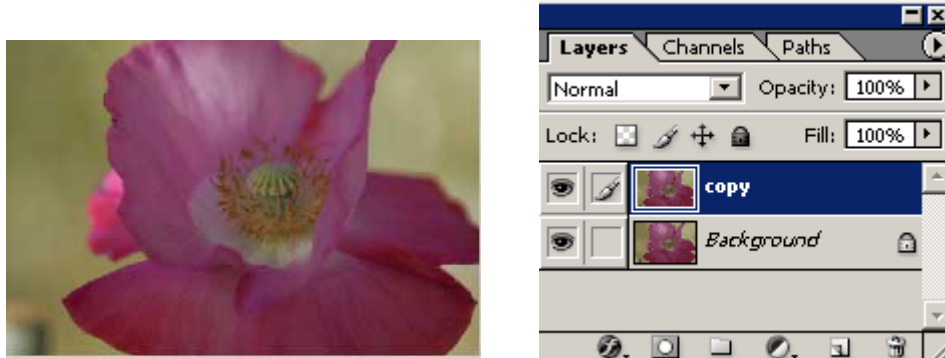


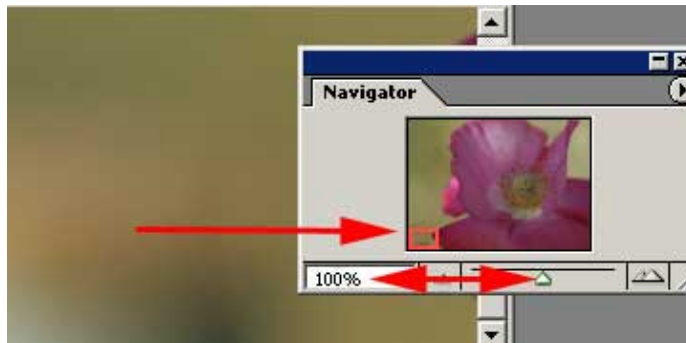
Photoshop Workflow for Beginners – These steps are VERY basic and will also work with Elements 2

1. Open an image in Photoshop/Elements. It could be from a scan or a digital camera. Immediately do a “save as”. Give it a name indicating it has been edited. I usually keep my edited images in a separate folder from original images.
2. Create a background copy by going to the top tool bar and clicking on “Layer>new>layer via copy” or using the shortcut ctrl/command J. You will need this layer for any cloning or sharpening you may do.

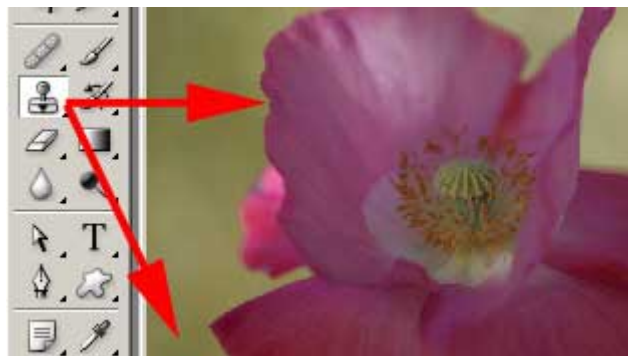


3. Crop the image if desired.

4. Use the Clone Stamp Tool or the new Healing brush or Patch Tool to remove unwanted elements from your image. In my image, there is something in the lower left corner and there is a fly on one of the petals. Use the Navigator to increase your view of the image. This brings it much closer so you can do a better job. You will also be able to see any dust that was on your negative or your digital file. This dust is sometimes only visible when viewed at 100%.



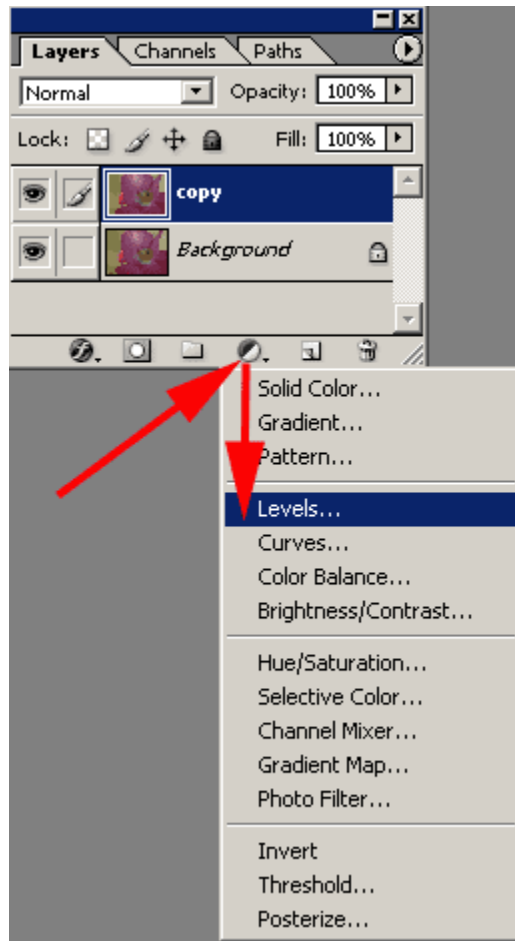
TIP: If an element I want to remove is particularly difficult, I might increase my view to 200 or even 300%. At that size, I have much more control over cloning. Please consult one of the many excellent Photoshop books available the best way to use the Rubber Stamp Tool or the new Healing Brush.



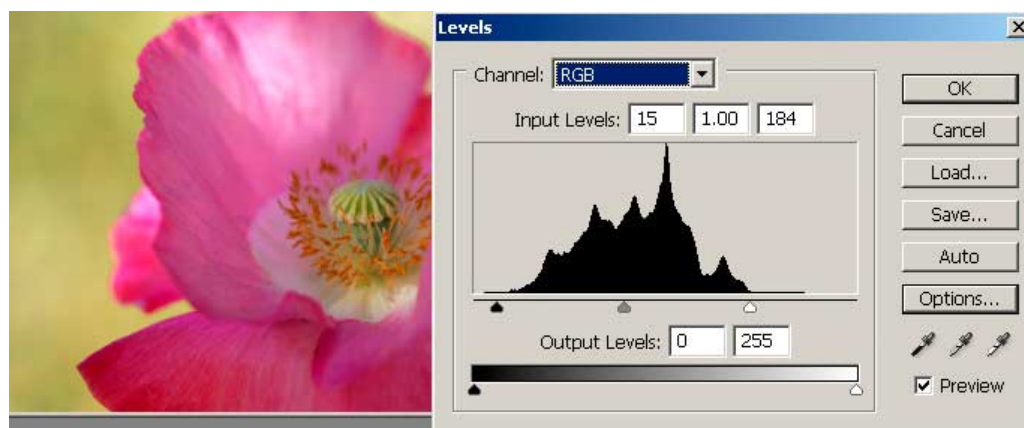
IMPORTANT: if you need to do more cloning **after** you have added adjustment layers, be sure to turn these adjustment layers off before you begin cloning! If you don't, the adjustments will apply *again* to each clone or healing stroke making a mess of your cloning.

4. Now that I have all unwanted elements removed, it's time for the next step..... Tonal Correction.

Look at your Layers Palette. If it isn't visible, go to the top toolbar and click on Window>Show Layers. Now, look at the bottom of the Layers Palette for the little circle that is half black and half white. This is the shortcut icon for all your color and tonal adjustment layers. Click and hold and then choose "Levels".



5. This brings up the "Levels" dialog box which shows a "histogram" of your image. It shows the distribution of the light, dark and medium values in your image. **Simply.....** if there is space to the right or left of your histogram, then information is missing in those areas. To correct this, just click and drag the left or right arrow over to where the histogram starts.



This is the **most basic** way to make tonal corrections and will work with images that have good exposure. I recommend that you consult any good Photoshop Book and learn the other tools available for these corrections. Avoid using "Auto Levels". It's rare that this would give you a good result.

6. Look at your Layers Palette. Note that you have a new layer. This is the "Levels Adjustment". Click the "eye" of the layer off and on (to the left of the layer). This will turn the adjustment on and off. If you made a mistake with your settings, you can change the adjustment by "double-clicking" on the first icon on that layer (looks like a tiny histogram). This will bring the Levels dialog box up again and you can reset or change your settings!

Notice that there are two parts to this new layer. The White Square to the right of the little Histogram Icon is a "Layer Mask". What is a Layer Mask? **A Layer Mask's function is to "show" or "hide" the layer it's attached to.**

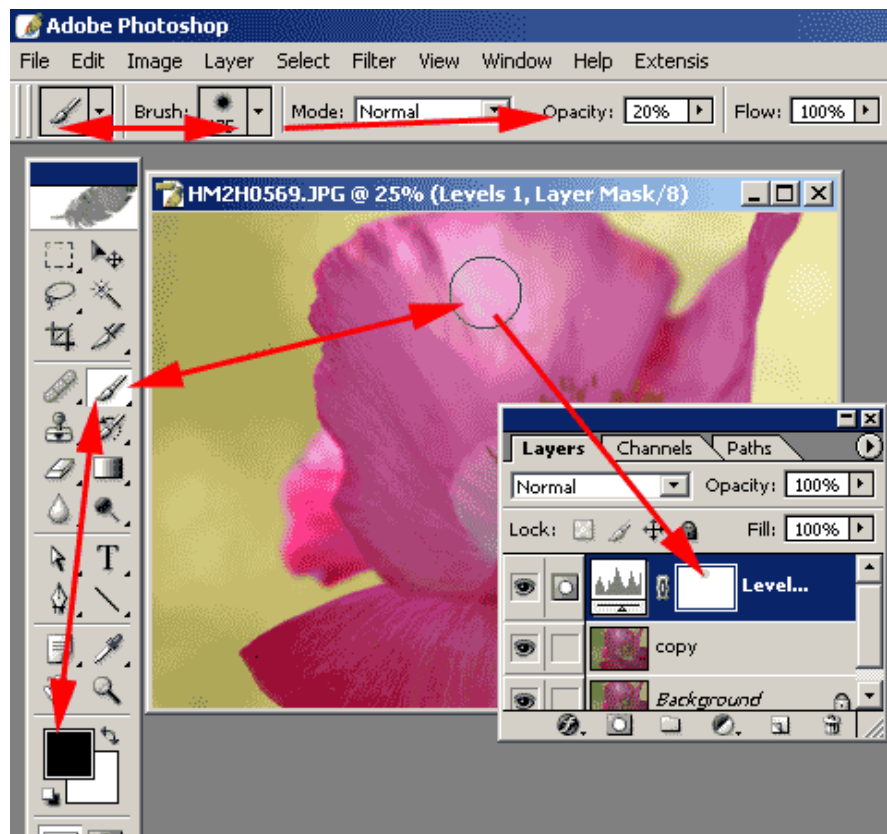
In this case, the Layer is an "Adjustment" so the Mask has the ability of either showing or hiding this adjustment. A White mask allows a layer adjustment to show. A Black Mask will hide the layer adjustment.

When dealing with Masks, it really helped me to think of Black and White NOT as "paint" but as "on and off" switches.

If you want to turn off **part** of the adjustment, all you need to do is **cover that area** with Black. Solid Black (100%) would completely hide the Levels adjustment. A lighter shade of Black (or gray) would only "dim" it a bit.

I think one of the petals became a little too light so I will turn off the Levels adjustment "slightly" in that area by using a lower opacity of Black. The simplest way to do this is to lower the opacity of your Paint Brush.

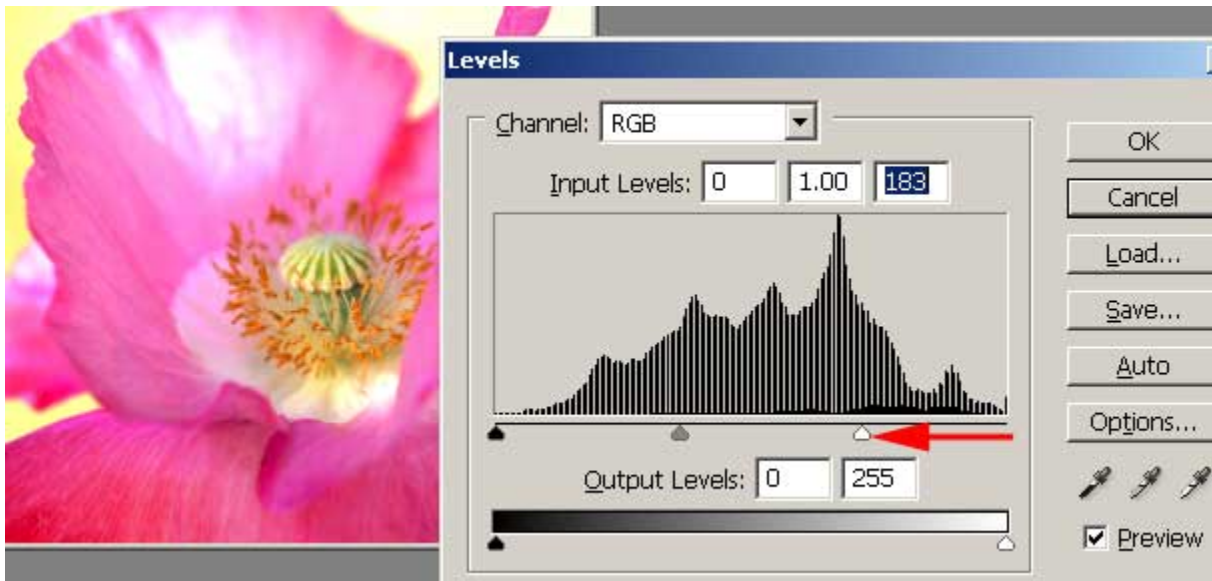
Choose a SOFT edged brush about the size of the area you want to affect. Lower the Opacity of the brush to about 20% or less. Make sure Black is your Foreground color. Click/hold and go over the area where you want to remove the adjustment. If you want to undo more, lift your finger from the mouse and Click/hold and brush over the area again.



What if you go too far! That's where the magic of Masks come in. Just switch your color to White and go over the area again. You will then be turning the adjustment back on in that area.

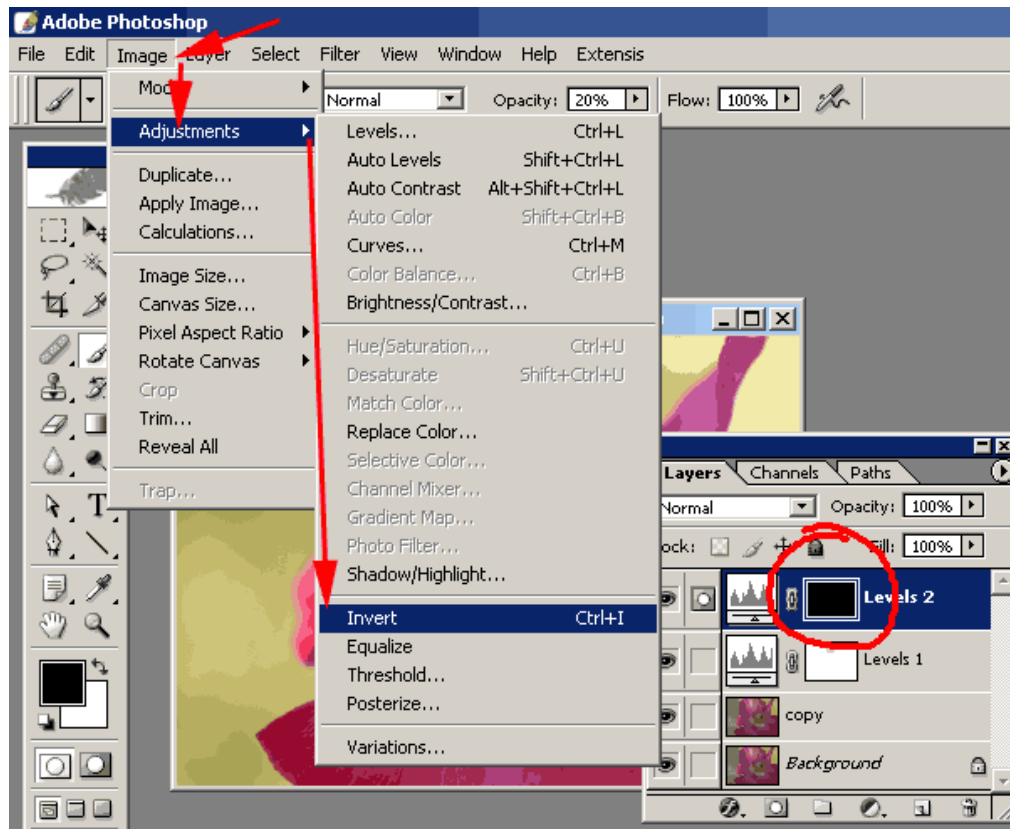
Notice that your Layer Mask is now has some Black or Grey on it. The White area shows where the Levels Adjustment is taking place and Black indicates the area where the Adjustment is only partially affecting the image.

7. At this point, I would like to brighten the center of the flower. I could do this a number of ways but a very quick and easy way is with a 2nd Levels Adjustment. Click the Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers Palette. This time, drag the right slider to the left and pay attention ONLY to the center of the flower. Do NOT worry that the rest of the image is becoming too bright. (You might also experiment by dragging the middle slider instead).

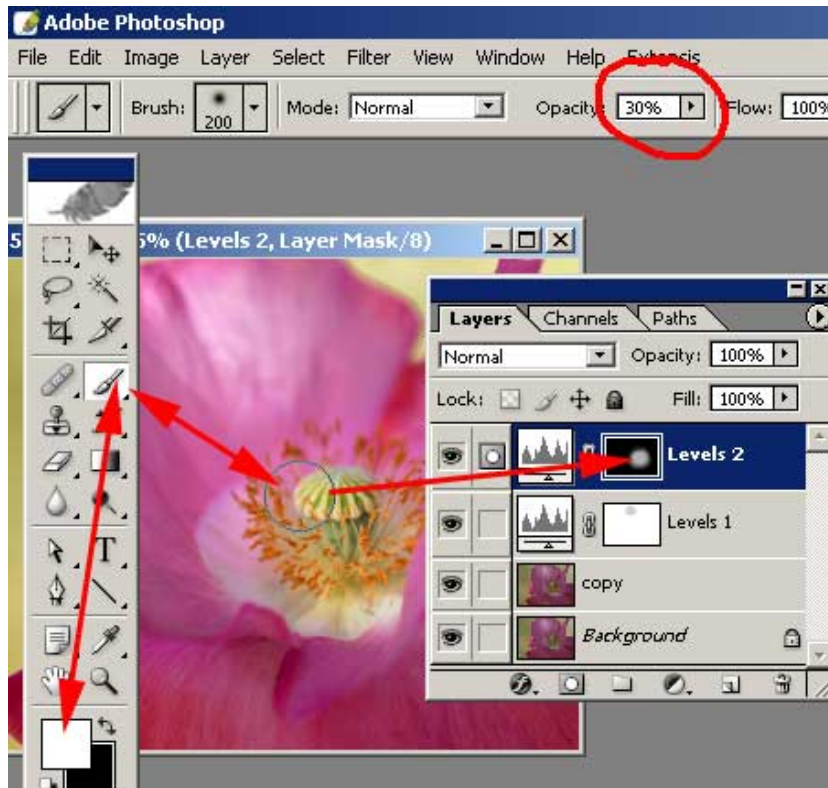


When the area you want to lighten is just as you want, click "OK". Don't worry that the rest of the image looks awful!

8. Next, I will turn OFF the Levels adjustment by changing the White Mask on the new Levels Adjustment Layer to a Black Mask. Go to the top toolbar and click on IMAGE>AJUSTMENTS>INVERT. The White Mask turns Black and the image returns to normal. The extreme adjustment is still there, though. It has just been "turned off".



So...how do you bring back the Levels Adjustment to the center of the Flower? You make that area of the Mask WHITE! Choose a soft brush. Change the foreground color to White. I may not want all of the adjustment to show in the center of the flower so I will set my brush opacity to 30%. Click/hold and brush over the area you want the adjustment to show. If you go outside of the area, just switch your color to BLACK and brush over again to turn it off. If I want more adjustment, I go over the area again with White. I go back and forth between white and black until I am satisfied with the result.



TIP: This method of using an Adjustment Layer is great for Dodging and Burning. You drag your sliders to adjust the darkest area in your image to an appropriate lightness. Again...you turn off the adjustment by filling the mask with black. Then use a brush set to a low opacity and paint with White over the areas you want to lighten.

LAST STEP: SAVE of the image leaving all layers intact.

9. AFTER saving my image, I will apply sharpening if needed. I say "IF NEEDED" because I only sharpen if I plan to print it or prepare it for the web. Either way, I do not save any sharpening I do. I've found that I don't always remember that I've already sharpened and so it can lead to over sharpening. It is very easy to apply sharpening again should I need to.

I use the Copy layer for sharpening OR I flatten my image and then sharpen. Go to top Menu Bar and click on "Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask". As far as what settings to use, please consult your Photoshop Books. When posting on the Web, I will put a copyright symbol and my name on the image. I might also give it a little Frame effect as below.

FINALLY....I encourage you to get in a habit of *always* using Adjustment Layers. They add very little to the file size but the best part is that you can call these layers up any time in the future; double click on them and re do your settings! It's really like have a permanent history with your image!